

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP



A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

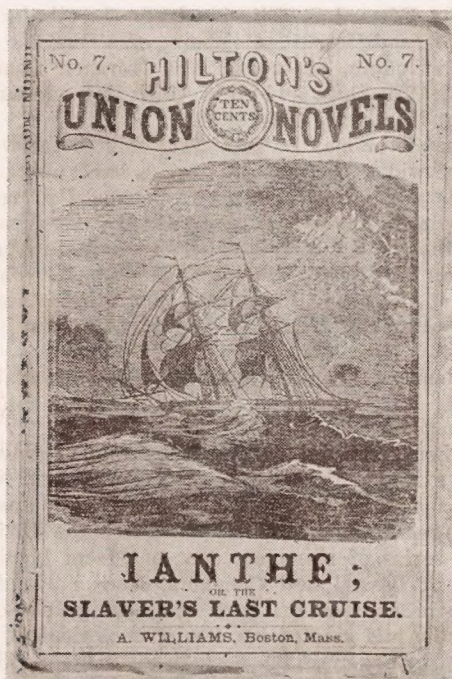
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Whole No. 490

The Edward S. Ellis Stories Published by The Mershon Complex

By Denis R. Rogers



DIME NOVEL SKETCHES NO. 162

HILTON'S UNION NOVELS

Publisher: Hilton & Co., 128 Nassau St., New York, N. Y. Issues: 4 (the actual number of issues bearing this series title is not known for certain). See DNR No. 488, May 1973 for full discussion on this series. Dates: 1865? Schedule of Issue: Unknown. Size: $6\frac{1}{4} \times 4\frac{1}{8}$ ". Pages: 100 to 120. Price: 10c. Illustrations: Pictorial cover in one color. Contents: Frontier and sea tales.

The Edward S. Ellis Stories Published by The Mershon Complex

By Denis R. Rogers

Some "Round-Up" readers have expressed an interest in the ramifications of hardback boys' book publishing in those far off days when such authors as Horatio Alger Jr., Harry Castlemon, Edward S. Ellis and Oliver Optic were at the zenith of their popularity.

My approach to the subject has been limited by my specialization in the works of Edward S. Ellis, but our editor felt that the general information uncovered in the course of my research would be of interest to more than Ellis collectors.

It is only fair to make it clear, however, that what follows has been written round the books of Edward S. Ellis, which were issued under the imprints of the many publishers making up what I have termed the Mershon Complex.

The title of this article was suggested by the fact that The Mershon Company is the focal point to and from which flow the publication patterns of the sixteen works by Edward S. Ellis involved. In all the Mershon Complex is made up of eighteen different publishers, of whom six were pre-Mershon (1886-1899), five (including, of course, The Mershon Company itself) were of the Mershon era (1899-1906) and eight (including one survivor of the Mershon era) were post-Mershon (1906-1933).

I trust that what is or may be applicable only to the works of Edward S. Ellis and what is of wider significance (e.g., a bankruptcy causing a firm to go out of existence) will be self-evident to "Round-Up" readers but, in that connection, I will point out here and now that at least three of the post-Mershon publishers in the context of this article (The A. L. Burt Company, M. A. Donohue & Company and Hurst & Company) were in existence before 1906. In the cases of Burt and Hurst they were publishing other Ellis works long before entering the Mershon Complex. Indeed both Hurst and Donohue also formed part of what I have termed the Lovell Complex.

First we will look at the six pre-Mershon publishers in the Complex:

Cassell & Company : New York

John Cassell, the founder of the famous English publishing house of the above name, which exists to this day, opened an office in New York in January 1860, from which the orders obtained for the firm's Family Bible in parts by Cassell's book agents were despatched. After the Civil War the branch flourished under a series of managers sent out from London, but publishing under the imprint of Cassell and Company, New York, did not take place until after the appointment of the first American manager in 1876.

Oscar M. Dunham had started his career in periodical retailing in Chicago and then became manager of the book department of The American News Company in New York. On joining Cassell Dunham was thirty-one and was

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regarded as something of a whiz kid.

Dunham was popular and respected in the book trade and held the post of treasurer of the American Booksellers' and Stationers' Provident Association for many years prior to his downfall. His drive brought success to Cassell's New York branch, which led to a move to a large building on Fourth Avenue in 1888. It was from the former Broadway address, however, that the first three of our sixteen Ellis works were first published.

The Great River Series (1886—3 volumes).

Down the Mississippi: A tale in two parts. The first relates the adventures of a young brother and sister lost on the prairie during a journey from St. Louis to Oregon. The second and larger part centers round the experiences of the next generation when the flood of March 1882 sends their Arkansas home spinning down the Father of Waters. The second part was originally a serial in *St. Nicholas*.

Up the Tapajos: A story in two parts, in the first of which two young cousins are trapped in a cave while hunting in Pike County, Pennsylvania. The second and main part relates the adventures of the cousins in Brazil, ending with the capture of one by hostile Arara Indians. The main part was originally a *Golden Argosy* serial.

Lost in the Wilds: A sequel to "Up the Tapajos" relating the experiences of the rescue party sent to liberate the captive youth from the Indians. Originally a *Golden Argosy* serial.

The common design used by Cassell for the Great River Series has a lake scene on the front cover and another lake scene on the spine. The size, 4¼x6 4/5", gives the volume an attractive chubby appearance. The books are known to have been issued in two different cover cloths, namely pale green and deep brown.

Control from far-away London irked the ambitious Dunham and, at the end of 1889, he persuaded his employers that, with new copyright legislation on the stocks, an independent American company was essential, if Cassell was to complete effectively with publishers having their headquarters in New York.

Cassell Publishing Company : New York

In January 1890 The Cassell Publishing Company was incorporated under the laws of New York State. The new firm purchased the goodwill and plant of the old branch with money raised by Dunham from associates in the printing and stationery trades, Cassell in London retaining little financial interest, but entering into a reciprocal sole agency agreement ("The House of Cassell . 1848-1958" by Simon Newell-Smith : Cassell & Company : London : 1958).

During the years 1890 to 1892 the new firm prospered and it was during that period that three new Ellis titles were issued. Of those three titles two were written for Cassell & Company in London and were reprinted by Dunham under the sole agency arrangement. The details are:

Lost in Samoa : (1890). Three beachcombers seek to prevent the recovery of a treasure of diamonds from a sunken wreck off Opolu in the Samoan Islands by kidnapping a six year old girl.

Tad; or, "Getting Even" with Him : (1890): The good influence of a schoolmaster wins a pupil and his father away from the doctrine of repaying evil with evil.

A common spine was used by The Cassell Publishing Company for the two titles, with a side view picture of a youth, who is wearing a pork pie hat and has his hands in his pockets.

Lost in Samoa: The front cover design depicts a man being assisted aboard a row boat, in which there are a youth, a sea captain and a little girl, with

a yacht in the background and mountains even further in the background. This is a free reproduction of one of the illustrations by Gordon Browne, an English artist, in the book. This edition has been found in pearl grey cloth, in pale green cloth and in dark green cloth.

Tad: or, "Getting Even" with Him: The front cover design shows a bare-headed youth rushing at another youth, with a log in the background. This design is a partial reproduction of one of the illustrations by John Schonberg in the book. This edition has been found in a pale blue cloth.

The third title was written for the new American firm and reprinted in London with a change of title ("Bob Lovell's Career," again under the sole agency arrangement. The details are:

From the Throttle to the President's Chair : (1892): The rise of a youngster from brakeman to locomotive engineer and then to president of the railroad company. Originally serialized in two parts in *The Holiday*, the first of which was a slightly revised reprint of an earlier *Golden Argosy* serial.

The picture on the spine is of a locomotive emerging from a tunnel, with the rails pointing to the publisher's name at the foot of the spine. The smoke from the engine rises to the top of the spine, where a headlamp shines at the left. The front cover picture is also of a locomotive, with a headlamp attached to the smoke stack. The train's carriages can just be seen behind the engine. The smoke rising from the engine forms a background at the top of the cover for the title: a lantern hangs in mid-air through the A of Chair. This edition has been found with a blue cover cloth, but it is not certain that no other colored cloth was used.

The Great River Series was also re-issued by The Cassell Publishing Company. One title has been found in a hybrid edition with a Cassell & Company text linked to a Cassell Publishing Company casing. The cover cloth is dark blue and the format is identical in all details to that of the chubby volumes introduced in 1886. Presumably all three titles appeared in this inherited format with the new firm's name at the foot of the spine, if not on the title page also.

Soon, however, the new company increased the overall size to 4 4/5 x 7 1/2" and changed the spine design to that used for "Lost in Samoa" and "Tad," which has already been described. The front cover design was not altered.

In June 1893 Oscar M. Dunham disappeared with \$180,000 of the firm's funds and The Cassell Publishing Company was insolvent. The reasons for Dunham's misappropriation and flight are not on record and the only subsequent information about him is an obituary notice in "The Publishers Weekly" (No. 1301 : 2 January 1897), reporting that he had died as a result of a saw-mill accident in Canada.

The principal creditor was William L. Mershon, the proprietor of The Mershon Press, Rahway, New Jersey, which had been the firm's printers. In December 1893 Mershon re-formed The Cassell Publishing Company with offices in East Seventh Street on Union Square.

In April 1898 Cassell & Company opened a new branch office in New York on West Eighteenth Street and were soon suing Mershon in the New Jersey courts. It may have been that lawsuit which led to the re-issue of at least one and probably all six of the Ellis titles in a new edition known as Cassell's Juvenile Library.

The cover design of that new edition was made up of various scrolls closely interlocking, with the series title on the front cover and the title of the story on the spine. The cover cloth of the one title found ("From the Throttle to the President's Chair") in this edition is light tan in color.

The new branch office of Cassell probably led to the final winding up of

The Cassell Publishing Company in 1899 and to the creation of The Mershon Company. Although not strictly relevant to this article it is perhaps worth mentioning that the new branch of Cassell in New York abandoned book publication in March 1902: it continued to operate on an agency basis until August 1913, when it was taken over by Funk & Wagnals.

Again, although outside the scope of this article, readers may care to know that, while under Dunham's management or presidency, Cassell in New York issued three other works by Ellis, namely:

The Youth's History of the United States from the Discovery of America by the Northmen to the Present Time : (4 volumes—1886/1887).

The Indian Wars of the United States from the First Settlement at Jamestown in 1607 to the close of the Great Uprising of 1890-91 : (1892).

The Third Man : (1893).

The Price-McGill Company : St. Paul

The Price-McGill Company, founded in 1892, had a very brief life, the name being changed to The Merriam Company in January 1894 and the business being transferred to New York. During 1893 Price-McGill issued five books by Edward S. Ellis. These were the River and Wilderness Series (1893—3 volumes) and the first two volumes of the War Whoop Series (1893).

The three volumes comprising the River and Wilderness Series ("The River Fugitives," "The Wilderness Fugitives" and "Lena-Wingo the Mohawk") were a three part reprint of a long serial, which had appeared in Frank Leslie's Boys' & Girls' Weekly under the pseudonym, Lieut. R. H. Jayne. These books do not fall within the strict ambit of this article.

The catalogue of The Price-McGill Company in the Publishers Trade List Annual for 1892 contains an advertisement of three forthcoming books by Lieut. R. H. Jayne, namely "Lost in the Wilderness," "The Phantom of the Prairie" and "The Dragon of the Plains." For some unexplained reason publication of "The Phantom of the Prairie" and "The Dragon of the Plains" was abandoned: so far as I am aware neither work (both had appeared originally as serials in Frank Leslie's Boys' & Girls' Weekly) was ever reprinted in book form.

The first two volumes of The War Whoop Series were:

Lost in the Wilderness: Two young cousins and an Irishman decide to walk to the Golden Gate after being shipwrecked on the Southern California coast and are amply rewarded for saving a redskin's life. Originally a serial in Frank Leslie's Boys' & Girls' Weekly.

Through Apache Land: A lad, enroute to join his father, who is the commandant of a frontier post, is captured by Apaches. Set in Arizona, Lower California and New Mexico about 1865, this tale was serialized originally in Frank Leslie's Boys' & Girls' Weekly.

The picture on the front cover is of a redskin, back to the reader, who is firing his rifle from behind a tree trunk on the verge of a wood. On the spine below the title there is a double line bordered diamond containing the series title. This diamond is separated from a motif of weapons by the author's name: Jayne. The motif is made up of a shield, a bow, a spear and two arrows. The cover cloth is dark green and all the lettering is in gold.

Before passing on to The Merriam Company, Ellis enthusiasts may care to note that The Price-McGill Company also published two tales by J. G. Bethune in paper wrappers, namely:

The Eye of Hercules : (The Crescent Library No. 5 : ca. July 1892): No surviving copy of this work has been located and no reprint is known. It was probably a detective story, as Ellis devoted the pseudonym, J. G. Bethune, almost exclusively, to such yarns at that time.

The F. Cipher : (The Idle Moments Series No. 19 : ca. September 1892):
A girl is kidnapped with intent to murder her in order to consummate an insurance swindle and is rescued by her detective guardian. No reprint of this tale is known.

The Merriam Company : New York

After the Price-McGill Company became The Merriam Company two more volumes were added to The War Whoop Series. They were:

In the Pecos Country and The Cave in the Mountain. A two volume reprint of a story by Lt. R. H. Jayne, originally serialized in Frank Leslie's Boys' & Girls' Weekly, about the adventures of a lad and an Irishman with Apaches, who raid a newly founded settlement in New Mexico. The time is about 1867.

Initially all the four tales comprising the War Whoop Series were issued under the original Lieut. R. H. Jayne by-line.

Merriam continued the format introduced by Price-McGill for the first two volumes in The War Whoop Series with a minor variation in the spine design and a change of cloth color from dark green to pale blue. That color alteration improved the appearance of the volumes immensely. The design variation consisted of a reversal of the positions of the series diamond and the weapon motif ornament. It is difficult to find any logical reason for this change, unless it seemed to Merriam that to have the weapon motif in the top half of the spine and the series diamond in the bottom half was more pleasing to the eye.

The three volume River and Wilderness Series was kept in print by The Merriam Company, who also issued two new three volume series under Ellis' own name. They were The Brave and Honest Series ("Brave Tom," "Honest Ned" and "Righting the Wrong") and The Through on Time Series ("Jack Midwood," "The Young Conductor" and "Four Boys").

In 1897 The Merriam Company went bankrupt (Publishers Weekly No. 1340 : 2 October 1897). As a result of the liquidation the publishing rights in The River & Wilderness Series, The Brave & Honest Series and The Through on Time Series were acquired by Henry T. Coates and Company of Philadelphia, as were the rights to "The Secret of Coffin Island," a tale by Ellis copyrighted but still unpublished by Merriam at the time of its failure. The reader is referred to the article in the September and October 1972 issues of "The Round-Up" for plot synopses of those ten tales.

The publication rights in the four volume War Whoop Series were acquired by William L. Mershon.

The American News Company : New York

The American News Company is best known as a distributor of other firms' publications. Indeed the imprint, The American News Company, Publisher's Agent, at the foot of the title page of many a dime novel, conceals the identity of the actual publisher of the series.

It is as a publisher of an Ellis work, however, that the famous firm comes within the scope of this article. Actually The American News Company issued two cloth bound books by Ellis, namely "The Life of Kit Carson" and "The Star of India," but the latter tale was never published by The Mershon Company. Suffice it to say, therefore, that "The Star of India," a tale of the Sepoy Mutiny in April 1857 and of a fabulous diamond, was offered in the same editions as "The Life of Kit Carson" in 1896.

The People's Edition of "The Life of Kit Carson, Hunter, Trapper, Guide and Indian Agent, U.S.A." is dated 1889 on the title page and so can be identified as the first edition of the biography in that form, although there had been a dime novel version published by Beadle & Company in April 1861.

("The Life and Times of Christopher Carson, the Rocky Mountain Scout and Guide") and a rewrite of selected incidents from that early Ellis work serialized three times by Frank Leslie, namely from October to December 1870 (under the title, "Kit Carson's Adventures" in Frank Leslie's Boys' & Girls' Weekly), from October 1874 to February 1875 (under the title, "The Adventures of General Kit Carson" in Frank Leslie's Boys of America) and from November to December 1875 (under the title, "Adventures of Kit Carson" in The Young American). Also, "Kit Carson the Guide; or, The Nestor of the Rocky Mountains" by Lieut. James H. Randolph (The American Novels No. 48 : December 1868) is to all intents and purposes a biography of Carson, although a fictional trapper is thrown in for good measure and the opening incidents are imaginary. Of course Lt. J. H. Randolph was an Ellis pen name.

Kit Carson seems to have held a special fascination for Ellis, who introduced the famous scout into many of his works of fiction. Ellis showed a similar interest in Simon Kenton, but never attempted a full scale biography of that famous pioneer.

The People's Edition was printed on poor pulp paper, which is likely to have become browned and brittle with age, if you are fortunate enough to find a copy. The format is difficult to describe briefly. The front cover is divided into three sections. The top section, covering 2 1/5", resembles an ornate dado, the main feature of which is the title picked out in the light blue of the cover cloth against a black background. The bottom section, covering 1", is another ornate band, split itself into three sections, the center of which measuring 1 3/5", contains the word, Illustrated, in black letters against a floral background. The sections on either side have a floral design in the light blue of the cover cloth against a black background. The center section, which measures 4 1/5 x 4 1/2", contains the series title in black letters in the center and a pattern of leaves and flowers, also in black, all around it. The spine is also densely patterned with a floral design, except for a gold title block, on which the title is picked out in letters of the cover cloth color. The series title appears at the foot of the spine.

The New York Publishing Company : New York

I have been able to find out little or nothing about this firm. The only catalogue of the company seen is that included in The Publishers Trade List Annual for 1895, which includes Empire Edition (selling at 50c) and Library Edition (selling at \$1.00) versions of both "The Life of Kit Carson" and "The Star of India." In the following year the titles, in the same editions and at the same prices, appeared in the catalogue of The American News Company. At that point The American News Company discontinued the People's Edition of "The Life of Kit Carson," which it had been offering since 1889.

The fact that The American News Company and The New York Publishing Company were offering between them three different editions of "The Life of Kit Carson" in 1895 indicates that either (a) there was a link between the two firms or (b) The New York Publishing Company published "The Life of Kit Carson" by virtue of an agreement with The American News Company.

In 1895 and 1896 the address of The American News Company was 39 & 41, Chambers Street, New York and that of The New York Publishing Company in 1895 was 26, City Hall Place, 13, Astor Place, New York. Unless those addresses were more or less contiguous (a point unchecked) there seems to be no circumstantial evidence in favor of (a) and so my preference is for (b). Again there is no supporting evidence, unless one regards the absence of "The Star of India" from The American News Company list prior to 1896, as such, but the balance of probability strikes me as pointing to (b) rather than to (a). Perhaps I should stress, however, that that is an opinion and not an argument supported by evidence.

What does seem less conjectural is the likelihood that The New York Publishing Company went out of business in 1895 and that The American News Company then acquired the publication rights in the Empire and Library editions, if not the whole business. Even so another possibility had better be mentioned. It is that The American News Company never published the Empire and Library editions, merely acting as publisher's agent. That can only be decided by the discovery of one or other of those editions of "The Life of Kit Carson" or "The Star of India" with The American News Company's imprint on the title page, as it appears on the People's Edition of "The Life of Kit Carson."

The Empire Edition of "The Star of India" (the only example of this edition seen) has a plain front cover, with a full length plain band at the left and plain corners at the right, the remainder being stippled. The back cover is complementary and the spine is divided into six sections by ridges. The title and author's name are in the second section and the series title in the fourth section. There is a thin gilt band at the top and bottom of the spine and a gilt top to the pages. The cover cloth color is deep plum.

No example of the Library Edition has as yet been located.

(To be continued)

RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES CONCERNING DIME NOVELS

THE NEGRO IN JUVENILE SERIES BOOKS, 1899-1930, Bibliographical Essay, by Peter A. Soderbergh. Article appearing in THE JOURNAL OF NEGRO HISTORY, Vol. 43, No. 2, April 1973. A review of boys' and girls' series books including the Merriwells and their treatment of blacks as characters in the stories. I'm sure I can recall some positive aspects of negro characterizations, though I must admit that the dime novels and series boys reflected the attitudes of the times in which they were published. (Copy of article supplied by John T. Dizer, Jr.)

VAST COLLECTION BOOKS REQUIRES SEPARATE HOUSING, by Marjorie Freeman. Article appearing in THE REGISTER, Leisuretime, Sunday, May 20, 1973 (Los Angeles).

Reviews the cast collection of Jack Schorr with a picture of Mr. Schorr in his den.

THE GREAT DIME NOVEL, by Tricia. Article appearing in the Norwich Bulletin, Sunday, June 10, 1973 (Connecticut). A rather good article tracing the history of dime novels, evidently written from some original sources as some of the dime novels cited have not to my knowledge been used before. (Sent in by Maurice Owen.)

Highest Prices paid for Leo Edwards dust jackets. No offer refused yet. Please drop me a line, stating title and your postpaid price.

Bob Brown

5611 Middough Ave.

Downers Grove, Ill. 60515

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

- 369. Deane Banta, 254 Greenfield Ave., San Mateo, Calif. 94403 (New mem.)
- 304. Daryl E. Jones, 4:06 16th St. #4, Lubbock, Texas 79416 (New address)
- 370 Mrs. Kathryn Joslyn, "The Prairie Wind," 209 N. Dakota, Sioux Falls, S. Dak. 57102 (New member)
- 22. Robert McDowell, 1024 Kings Ave., Jacksonville, Fla. 32207 (New add.)

Stoddard, Saltillo Boys and Syracuse

By John T. Dizer, Jr.

Original information is highly desirable for anyone doing research in the field of children's books. It is particularly important when it concerns a prolific writer who was at one time well-accepted and influential in the field. W. O. Stoddard was such a writer. No modern history in the field even mentions Stoddard nor do we find as much interest in him among boys book collectors as, for instance, Ellis, Optic or Alger, all of whom wrote during the same period. He is in the unfortunate position of having written books which were well received during his lifetime but are currently not particularly popular with librarians, with historians of the genre or collectors.

Probably the most popular and enduring book of the more than 100 which he wrote was "Saltillo Boys" which went through numerous printings and editions. Pasted inside the front cover of my 1907 edition is a newspaper clipping, apparently from a Syracuse, New York paper. The item is undated but from internal evidence appears to date from about that time. The clipping is reprinted in its entirety below:

SIDE ISSUES

A Story of Syracuse in 1850

The story called "Saltillo Boys" was published in 1882. The edition now in use in the children's room in the Public Library is dated 1895, and it bears the unmistakable marks of popularity. The copy now before me has been thumbed by scores of eager readers, and succeeding editions will be thumbed by scores of others. W. O. Stoddard's story well deserves this eminence. It is a wholesome lively narrative of boyish experience, each chapter containing an adventure. The recovery of a number of chickens stolen from one of the Saltillo boys by an inhabitant of the Tamrack Swamp, a geologizing expedition in the Valley in which the shortest one of the party narrowly escapes being overtaken by an exasperated bull, a baseball game which a gang from the canal district tries to break up with disaster to the leader of the gang, a Fourth of July night in which the Whiting Block is burned down and two of the Saltillo boys escape by climbing down the awning rods from an upper window, excursions afoot to Green Lake and the Devil's Punch Bowl, the visit of Daniel Webster to Saltillo and his address in front of the City Hall, described as 'an old-fashioned brick building with butcher stalls in the first story and dark and mysterious crypts in the basement for the brief confinement of offenders against the law,' an illfated swimming party in one of the salt reservoirs north of the city, all these and more are described with vivacity and humor. It is a bully book.

For grown up people a most interesting passage in "Saltillo Boys" is this:

The school ceased to exist, and the boys were all scattered, as American boys must and will scatter. Nevertheless if anybody knew who the Saltillo boys really were and would trace in their after years the effect of that brief experiment, it would be well worth while.

Saltillo was Syracuse. The Saltillo boys were the boys of a private school on Fayette Park. The principal of the school, known in the story as Mr. Hayne, was James W. Hoyt. The other characters, so far as they have been identified, were:

Charley Ferris—Charles E. Fitch; Joseph Martin—Rev. Joseph May; Andy Wright—Andrew D. White; Mr. Ayring—Joseph Allen; Madame Skinner—

Mrs. Smith; Fanny Swayne—Fanny Lawrence; Jim Swayne—James Lawrence; Jefferson Carroll—Carroll E. Smith; Pug Merriwether—John Butler; Otis Burr—Otis Burt; Nully Merriwether—Mary Butler.

A lady named Huntington was principal of a girl's school, is the Miss Af-ferman of the story. W. O. Stoddard himself, the author of the book, may or may not have figured in its pages. However that may be, he deserves to be mentioned among the members of that remarkable group of youngsters, so many of whom distinguished themselves in after life, one as a scholar, another as an abolitionist preacher, another as ambassador to Germany, another as a newspaper editor and politician. Mr. Stoddard himself, now living in Madison, N. J., was born in Homer. His father was a bookseller and publisher in Syracuse during Williams boyhood. Later William Stoddard became private secretary to Lincoln and afterwards United States marshal for Arkansas. No less than fifty books are credited to him, verses, boy stories, a life of Lincoln and a "Lives of the Presidents. But "Saltillo Boys, the story of Fayette Park about the year 1850 bids fair to outlive all the others.

Somebody should ask Andrew D. White whether he did in fact astound the boys of Syracuse in that year of grace by sending up a kite with lanterns attached to it. Somebody should interrogate "Charlie" Fitch concerning the episode of the bull in the pasture and ask some of those who knew Carroll E. Smith intimately whether it was he who set fire to the West Park bon fire. John Derry and Will Torrance, with several of the lesser characters of the story remain to be identified. There may be readers of this column who know who they were. There may be those who know also what became of James W. Hoyt, the principal of the school, after he left Saltillo.

Such information should be put on record, for "Saltillo Boys" is more than a juvenile classic; it is a work of local history of which Syracuse should be proud.

P. M. P.

The article seems to show conclusively that "Saltillo Boys" was based on actual incidents and characters and it identifies most of the incidents and characters. This is the exception in boys books and the more interesting for its rarity.

An interesting sidelight to the reference to the Syracuse library is contained in Roger Garis's affectionate book about his father, "My Father Was Uncle Wiggily." Howard Garis also lived in Syracuse as a child and apparently used the same library, too enthusiastically for the librarians.

"There was a public library in Syracuse. When my father had finished the few Rollo books he owned, and could find no more amusement in his copy of the Arabian Nights, and was tired of Hans Christian Andersen, his father got him a public library card. This opened a new world, and he took out books so rapidly the library authorities clamped down on him.

"He would get a book in the morning, read it by afternoon, and immediately go back to get another. After he had done this several times, one of the librarians took his card and wrote on it:

"This boy reads too much. Hereafter he will be permitted to take out books only on Mondays and Fridays'. And that's all he could get."

The newspaper clipping gives a few facts about Stoddard's rather remarkable career. The "Dictionary of American Biography" gives many more including a statement about the number of books written which is at variance with the 50 mentioned in the article.

"In all, Stoddard wrote over one hundred books . . ." "His books for boys, some seventy-six in number, were perhaps his greatest literary successes."

Stoddard became joint editor of the "Central Illinois Gazette" at Champaign, Illinois shortly after graduating from the University of Rochester in 1858. He "worked ceaselessly for Lincoln's election in the Illinois senatorial campaign of 1858 and he was one of the first Illinois editors to suggest him for the presidency."

After the presidential election of 1860 he was appointed by Lincoln as a secretary to sign land patents, then enlisted as a private in the Union army for three months and after being discharged became Lincoln's assistant private secretary. "Stoddard relates the 'queer kind of tremor' that came over him as he copied from 'Abraham Lincoln's own draft of the first Emancipation Proclamation' (Atlantic Monthly, March 1925, p. 337.)"

He served as United States marshal for Arkansas from 1864 to 1866 and later "he became engaged in journalistic activities and in telegraphic, manufacturing, and railways enterprises, obtaining nine patents for mechanical inventions. From 1873 to 1875 he served as a clerk in the department of docks, New York City." He spent his later years in Madison, New Jersey where he died in 1925 shortly before his 90th birthday.

A contemporary and rather reliable source as to his popularity in the late 1800's is "Five Thousand Books, An Easy Guide to the Best Books in Every Department of Reading" "selected, classified and briefly described by a corps of experienced editors under the direction of the Literary Bureau of The Ladies' Home Journal." This book was published in 1895 when Edward Bok was editor of the "Journal" and "the aim has been to choose books of permanent interest and value, and at the same time to provide for all classes of readers, and all healthful tastes"

The section on "Fiction For Young Folks" lists 19 books by Stoddard recommended by the "corps of experienced editors." These include *Chris the Model Maker*, *Crowded Out o' Crofield*, *Little Smoke*, *On the Frontier*, *The Battle of New York*, *The Captain's Boat*, *Guert Ten Eyck*, *Tom and the Money King*, *Among the Lakes*, *Dab Kinzer*, *The Quartet*, *Winter Fun*, *Gid Granger*, *Chuck Purdy*, *The Red Mustang*, *The Talking Leaves*, *Two Arrows* and *The Cave* in addition to *Saltillo Boys*. The editors comment, "Stoddard's books are always wholesome; his boys and girls are real flesh and blood." This was literally true in "Saltillo Boys."

But fashions and interests change and by 1920 when "Children's Literature" by Curry and Clippinger was published Stoddard was not included. There is no mention of him in any of the currently popular books on childrens literature such as "Children's Literature in the Elementary School" by Huck and Young, "A Critical History of Children's Literature" by Meigs et al or in "Children and Books" by Arbuthnot. This is really a little unfair as well as unscholarly since Stoddard produced a large body of well-accepted boys books which exerted a significant influence on the youth of his era. He wasn't even tainted with the stigma of writing dime novels! Although Miller (Dime Novel Authors) thought "Major Henry B. Stoddard" who wrote "Gordon Lillie, the Boy Interpreter of the Pawnees," and "Lillie, the Reckless Rider; or, The Wild Hunter's Secret" was a pen name for W. O. Stoddard, his son, W. O. Stoddard, Jr. assured Albert Johannsen that his father never used this name. Johannsen states, "Major Henry B. Stoddard" was a pseudonym of Col. Prentiss Ingraham.

Trowbridge and Kellogg, two other contemporaries of Stoddard, seem to be making somewhat of a comeback in certain circles. It is quite certain that anyone really concerned with the history and influence of childrens books should also be familiar with Stoddard. This old newspaper clipping sheds interesting light on one of his best books.

OBITUARY

Mr. William G. Lee, a book collector from childhood and a long time member of the Happy Hour Brotherhood, died April 11, 1973. Mr. Lee was vice president of the Bell Federal Savings and Loan Association. He had been with the company from 1940. Mr. Lee will be missed by many of his Round-up correspondents.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Eddie,

I've had some errors in my bibliography of the Cleek books (DNR, April 1973) called to my attention.

CLEEK, THE MAN OF THE FORTY FACES should be London and New York; Cassell. (In abbreviating this to London, I gave the impression there was only one edition).

THE RIDDLE OF THE NIGHT; add: London: Simpkin and Marshall, 1916.

THE FROZEN FLAMES. Cross out "publisher and date not known" and correct this to read London: Simpkin and Marshall, 1920.

This is information taken from the British Museum Catalogue, which I seem to have missed getting into my notes when I worked on the bibliography.

—Randy Cox

NEWS NOTE

Charles F. Preston has been definitely revealed to be Horatio Alger, Jr. "Peter Timmerman; or, The Royal Carpenter of Amsterdam," appeared in True Flag (Boston) on August 25, 1855 with Charles F. Preston listed as author. Its next appearance was in "Bertha's Christmas Vision" by Horatio Alger, Jr. in 1856. (Found and corroborated by Gilbert K. Westgard.)

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